

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

SAJ-01 COA-02 EB-11 INT-08 AGR-20 OMB-01 TRSE-00

RSR-01 /151 W

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R 011645Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3839

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USEC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

USUN NEW YORK 350

USMISSION NATO

USOECD PARIS 490

USMISSION GENEVA

COMICEDEFOR

NISRA KEFLAVIK

CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 0898

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR IC UK

SUBJECT: FISHERIES DISPUTE: NO HALT IN BRITISH FISHING

1. SUMMARY: BRITISH FISH CATCH OFF ICELAND RELIABLY ESTIMATED TO BE 155 - 165 THOUSAND TONS DURING PAST YEAR AND THEREFORE BELOW 170 THOUSAND TONS PERMITTED BY ICJ INTERIM DECISION. REPORTS ARE THAT BRITISH DO NOT PLAN TO HALT OR RESTRICT FISHING ACTIVITIES OR CONSIDER WITHDRAWAL OF NAVAL PROTECTION AT END OF CURRENT FISHING YEAR. IF TRUE THIS ACTION WILL HAVE A DECIDEDLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON IDF NEGOTIATING CLIMATE. END SUMMARY.

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2. INDEPENDENCE PARTY DAILY MORGUNBLADID REEPOGTED JULY 31 THAT BRITISH FONOFF SPOKESMAN IN LONDON HAD INDICATED THAT BRITISH CATCH OFF ICELAND DURING PAST YEAR WOULD AMOUNT TO APPROXIMATELY 155-165 THOUSAND TONS (MORGUNBLADID INTERPRETS YEAR AS RUNNING FROM AUGUST 17, 1972, THE DATE OF ICJ INTERIM DECISION PERMITTING BRITISH TO CATCH UP TO 170 THOUSAND TONS). MORGUNBLADID REPORT ALSO CITED LONDON TIMES ARTICLE STATING THAT BRITISH TRAWLERS WILL NOT SUSPEND OPERATIONS, BUT WILL CONTINUE FISHING.

2. BRITISH DCM CONFIRMED THAT 155-165 THOUSAND TONS FIGURE WAS OFFICIAL, BUT "UNATTRIBUTABLE", AND EMB HAD NOT YET RECEIVED NOTIFICATION FROM LONDON THAT FIGURE HAD BEEN RELEASED PUBLICLY. HE SAID THAT HMG CALCULATED FISHING YEAR FROM SEPT 1, 1972, THE DATE OF ICELAND'S UNILATERAL EXTENSION, BUT THAT CATCH FIGURE WOULD BE BELOW 170 THOUSAND TONS BY EITHER CALCULATION.

3. BRITISH DCM THEN COMMENTED THAT FINAL FIGURES FOR SEPT -
- JUNE 30 PERIOD WERE 117,000 TONS. HE SAID THAT CATCH HAD BEEN "VERY HIGH INDEED" DURING JULY AND THAT ANNUAL FIGURE WOULD PROBABLY AMOUNT TO CLOSER TO 165 THOUSAND THAN 155 THOUSAND TONS BY AUGUST 31. HE ALSO OBSERVED THAT CATCHES HAVE IMPROVED MARKEDLY SINCE INTRODUCTION OF NAVAL PROTECTION. HE CONFIRMED MORGUNBLADID REPORT OF TIMES ARTICLE THAT THERE WILL BE NO SUSPENSION OF FISHING ACTIVITIES OR NAVAL PROTECTION.

4. FOREGOING COMMENTS DAMPEN ANY PROSPECT THAT HMG MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO AGREE TO TEMPORARY REMOVAL OF NAVAL PROTECTION IN ORDER TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS FOR INTERIM AGREEMENT WITH GOI. MORE SERIOUSLY, CONTINUED PRESENCE OF BRITISH FRIGATES, ESPECIALLY IF STILL HERE IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY, WILL MAKE AN IDF ACCOMMODATION MORE DIFFICULT. IRVING

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